

Coach Wacker's survivors include his children Bruce, Kristen, and Louis, and his grandchildren Anna Whitehead, Adele Kraus, and Robin Kraus. I offer my condolences to them on their loss.

SITES RESERVOIR PROJECT ACT

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2019

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today I introduce the "Sites Reservoir Project Act," which would provide federal support for the 1.8 million acre-feet Sites Reservoir and related water infrastructure in Colusa and Glenn Counties.

Specifically, the "Sites Reservoir Project Act" would direct the Bureau of Reclamation to complete the feasibility study for the project and, if deemed feasible, authorize federal funding and technical support for its construction. The reservoir would be owned and operated by the Sites Joint Powers Authority, a regional consortium of local water agencies and counties formed in 2010.

Our state must make forward-looking investments to capture and store water during wet years for use during drought. The Sites Reservoir is one such critical infrastructure project needed to meet California's future water needs, given climate change. The project is essential to integrated water management in the Sacramento Valley and would maximize storage of excess Sacramento River flows during winter storms for use later in the year. The Sites Reservoir Project would increase storage capacity north of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, improving resiliency in our statewide water system, and helping to advance California's renewable energy goals with the pumped-storage component planned for phase II of the project.

To date, more than \$1.2 billion in public funding has been committed to the Sites Reservoir Project, including \$816 million from California's State Water Bond (2014 Proposition 1) and federal funding from the Bureau of Reclamation for the feasibility study and related work. In November 2018, the U.S. Department of Agriculture committed \$449 million in low-interest financing from the Rural Development Program, recognizing the project's importance to California's farming communities.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague and northern California neighbor Congressman DOUG LAMALFA (R-CA) for his support as the bill's original cosponsor and for sponsoring similar legislation in previous Congresses.

I look forward to working with all members of the California delegation to advance this bipartisan bill and see this critical reservoir project completed.

JEREMIAH G. HAMILTON

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2019

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, as we celebrate Black History Month, I rise today to commemorate the life of Jeremiah G. Hamilton,

the first black millionaire in the United States, whose story has been absent from the history books. I have the honor of representing the district in which Mr. Hamilton lived and worked.

Born in the West Indies in 1807, Mr. Hamilton made his way to New York in 1828 and began amassing his fortune by selling stocks to both black and white entrepreneurs. He was touted as being astute in successfully predicting the markets and became a prominent financier and businessman on Wall Street in the pre-Civil War era.

Mr. Hamilton defied many conventions of his time as he rose to the top of the business world. He owned stock of railroad companies on whose trains he was not legally allowed to ride. He married a white woman named Eliza Morris and had a close relationship with his friend Benjamin Day, who was the publisher of the Sun Newspaper. He took on titans of industry, including battling Cornelius Vanderbilt over control of the Accessory Transit Company until he got a settlement. In fact, in Vanderbilt's obituary it is stated, "There was only one man who ever fought the Commodore to the end, and that was Jeremiah Hamilton . . . the Commodore respected him."

However, Mr. Hamilton faced the horrors of the rampant racism and violence against African-Americans in the mid-19th century. In the 1830s, insurance companies blackballed him and refused to underwrite his business ventures. During the draft riots in 1863, white men unsuccessfully sought to lynch Mr. Hamilton in his own home.

Jeremiah G. Hamilton died in 1875, leaving behind an estate of \$2 million, which would be around \$45 million today.

It is vital that the history of America reflects the lives of all Americans, and I am proud to help share some of the lost history from the 10th Congressional District.

Madam Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing not only the life of Jeremiah G. Hamilton but the dedicated work of both the Committee to Commemorate Jeremiah G. Hamilton and historian Shane White to create a permanent place in history for the first African-American millionaire.

The Committee to Commemorate Jeremiah G. Hamilton was established in February 2018 by community activists, including Dr. Sam D. Albert, Hon. Louise Dankberg, Hon. Alan J. Gerson, Gail Green, Barbara Guinan, Greg Lambert, Esq., Christine Merritt, Hon. Daisy Paez, Mark P. Thompson, Leona Zeplin and the Committee's Co-Chairs Dolores Leito and Hon. Michelle D. Winfield.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF BETTIE MAE FIKES

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 28, 2019

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Ms. Bettie Mae Fikes, the "Voice of Selma."

At the age of 16, Ms. Fikes was one of the singers of the Civil Rights Movement and a member of the Students Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which was the only national civil rights organization led by young

people during the Movement. Ms. Fikes bravely led marches with songs, registered voters, boycotted buses, sat in at lunch-counters and led walkouts at R.B. Hudson High School to support the desegregation of the school.

From an early age, Ms. Fikes began singing with her parents, both of whom were from families of gospel singers and preachers. Ms. Fikes was exposed to classic hymns and songs and was encouraged to use her voice to sing with her parents. At the tender age of four, Ms. Fikes had her first big performance: her first church solo. With that success, she began to travel throughout the country with her parents' groups, the SB Gospel Singers and the Pilgrim Four. However, when Ms. Fikes's mother passed away when she was 10 years old, she moved around from Michigan, California, and finally to Selma, Alabama.

Ms. Fikes continued to be involved in singing in the church when she moved to Selma. She used every opportunity she could to let her voice be heard. It is no surprise, given her background that she proved to be an emerging music leader when she joined SNCC at age 16. The more she became involved with SNCC, the more it became apparent that she would go to jail.

The foot soldiers of the Civil Rights Movement prepared themselves for the eventuality that they would be arrested. If an officer announced that they were under arrest, they knew to fall to their knees and to force the officers to carry them to the bus. However, when the time came, Ms. Fikes and her friend Evelyn Manns realized the police were using cattle prods on the young men and women. Hoping to avoid this pain, both women stood up and loaded the bus to go to jail.

Ms. Fikes bounced between the county and city jail, Camp Selma and Camp Camden. She was brought before Judge Reynolds where she was repeatedly asked who organized the march. Judge Reynolds and others hoped that the students would implicate Martin Luther King, Jr. in hopes of building a case against Dr. King for contributing to the delinquency of minors. Instead, Ms. Fikes loudly declared: "Jesus lead me, and my mama feed me." This frustrated the judge and led to Ms. Fikes being jailed for nearly three weeks.

Instead of being defeated, Ms. Fikes used this time to organize other young people who were also sent to jail.

"I had been there so long I felt like a trustee there," she once said. With this new Trustee status and the assistance of Reverend F.D. Reese of Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church in Selma, Ms. Fikes was able to help others.

Ms. Fikes also bore witness to Bloody Sunday. That morning Ms. Fikes was a messenger, carrying messages from Brown Chapel AME to the head of the line at the base of the Edmund Pettus Bridge. She described the experience later, saying, "You know how it feels just before a storm—there was nobody walking on the streets . . . it was such a stillness that you can't explain."

As tensions rose, Ms. Fikes continued delivering messages back and forth, when, finally, a half block from the church, she heard the rumbling of Bloody Sunday: "Out of this stillness, this earthquake [sound], the ground it just shifted . . . and when I looked up . . . people were running everywhere." Despite the hate and the violence, Ms. Fikes saw the true spirit of the foot soldiers of Selma.

After her time in Selma, Ms. Fikes went on to become a very successful singer who has